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Stephanie O'Keefe, Chair
Amherst Select Board
c/o Laurence Shaffer, Town Manager
Town Hall
4 Boltwood Avenue
Amherst, MA 01002

May 25, 2010

Ref: T0233

RE: Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program
Preliminary Assessment for the Wildwood Elementary School
Amherst, Massachusetts

Dear Chairwoman O'Keefe:

We are pleased to transmit the enclosed five (5) copies of the Preliminary Assessment for the Wildwood Elementary School as part of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Program, managed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). This school was selected to receive a Preliminary Assessment to outline our recommendations for improvements to the walking and bicycling environment near the school.

We developed the report findings and recommendations based on information submitted by Wildwood Elementary School staff, meetings and discussions with school and town staff, and field visits to inspect infrastructure and observe student behavior. Once the recommendations were developed to a preliminary level, we reviewed them with Mr. Guilford Mooring, Superintendent of Amherst Department of Public Works, who generally concurred with the findings and recommendations. The enclosed assessment report includes additional detailed graphics along with a comprehensive description of the proposed recommendations.

We request that you review the recommendations with other Town staff and Board members for consistency with any previously identified Town projects and municipal standards. We also ask that you review this document in light of comments previously provided to the school by teachers and concerned parents. In order to maintain progress on these recommendations and facilitate their implementation, we request that you submit all comments on this document within four (4) weeks.

Once we are able to confirm the details on the recommended SRTS Infrastructure project and the general process for its potential implementation, we will evaluate the project along with others that are at a similar stage in the project development process. If the project can be programmed with SRTS funds, the SRTS Team will complete a field survey and prepare detailed design plans for subsequent Town and MassDOT review. In terms of the public process, should a project be advanced, MassDOT would conduct a Design Public Hearing when the project reaches at least 25 percent completion. To ensure full community support, however, we ask that the Select Board solicit public comment on the conceptual designs in

this Preliminary Assessment at an upcoming Select Board meeting, to which project abutters and stakeholders are invited.

During a subsequent design process, the SRTS Team would prepare right-of-way plans depicting the proposed improvements for the Town's use in securing the property necessary to facilitate construction. Please note that the Town of Amherst would be responsible for securing any required easements and right-of-way takings. As part of this process, the Town would also be responsible for all costs associated with appraisals, legal document preparation (including Town Meeting), and compensatory fees for land acquisition. Based on our recent experience, the land necessary for sidewalk projects is generally limited to a narrow sliver at the back of sidewalk. With the Town's successful acquisition of property for this public use, all construction costs for the project will be 100 percent federally funded.

We look forward to your written endorsement of the recommendations and the Town's commitment to secure the right-of-way and easements necessary to construct the project. If you have any questions regarding our assessment or the process for implementing the improvements, please do not hesitate to contact me at (978) 794-1792 x145. I look forward to working with you on this very important project.

Sincerely,
TEC, Inc.



Kevin R. Dandrade, PE, PTOE
Principal / Project Manager

cc: Guilford Mooring, Superintendent, Department of Public Works
Matthew Behnke, Principal, Wildwood Elementary School
James P. Cope, MassDOT
Donna Smallwood, MassRIDES
TEC File

DB Steens' notes
Called on July 1st.

Mr. Dandrade was away
on July 1. Spoke with
Jennifer Williams. Need to get
the Town to
accept & get them
to work with them.

1. Are there any projects this
conflicts with & does it meet town
standards?
2. Any record of teachers + parents
comments?
3. Which town staff? SB, Town
manager + DPW - any others?

